

From the Director

Spring is about new beginnings so it is the perfect time of year to be launching our new look newsletter, soon to be available on-line at www.holdsworth.org.au - we encourage you to tell all your friends and families about Holdsworth and get them to check out the site when it comes on line later in September.

A community is only able to sustain itself if we are able to make the right connections. Our new initiative to integrate a program for young children with special needs into our much loved playgroup is an example of a cost-effective, integrated solution for an area of great demand. Similarly, we are now working collaboratively with Eastern Respite & Recreation, our sister organisation for disability services in the Eastern suburbs. We hope to be able to offer real service improvements in disabilities, especially to families and carers who make use of both our services.

Generous supporters make it possible for us to deliver more where it can make the most difference. This quarter we received a new oven from Smeg Omega and a new dishwasher from Electrolux. Thank you so much to both companies for your generosity. You all now know where to go for your new appliances! You can try out ours when you hire our facilities for your next children's party or function.

Finally I would like to say how pleased I am to have joined Holdsworth and look forward to meeting many of you when you come to the Centre or when you call. I am very keen that we continue to develop as the community centre that you, our members and friends, want us to be. We encourage you to give us your honest feedback, both brickbats and bouquets. We also want to make sure that we offer programs and services that match your aspirations to connect with our community. Let us know what you think by completing and returning the enclosed annual member survey.

Over the next month we are meeting with our two principal government funders, the Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care and the Ministry of Transport to review our performance and most importantly, start to plan for the next triennium (2009-2011) of funding under the State & Commonwealth HACC program. Now is the time to let us know how we can make a difference in your life.

*Michael Ryan
August 2007*



New look, same commitment

Holdsworth Community Centre and Services has a bright and dynamic new look as it enters a new phase in its history. This Newsletter, website and the new logo are parts of that strategy. The dynamic logo, designed by Ben Mawston, incorporates the centre's name with icons that evoke the work and spirit that is so much part of the centre. In considering design options it was important to continue to present the name as it has been a recognised and valued part of the community for so long. By creative insertion of shapes we can add life to the words and also have a series of images that can stand alone to represent our work. In partnership with Woollahra Council, and with the NSW Departments of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Community Services and the Ministry of Transport, we are well placed to grow and adapt to meet the needs of the area.

(Above: Michael Ryan with Family Services Team Leader Lucian Stoffell and some of the playgroup children)

The Annual General Meeting of Holdsworth Street Community Centre Woollahra Inc. will be held at the centre at 6pm on Wednesday September 19th. All welcome! Come and see the launch of our new website. Please RSVP to 9302 3600

A carer's appreciation

I joined the Woollahra Carers Network, run by Holdsworth Centre last year. My son was 15 at the time and I had never been part of a group to support the carers of "special children". There were about 10 of us mothers, all with children with varying disabilities, but mostly autism or intellectual disability or both!. The lectures by various experts on topics, such as estate planning and legal issues, were of great value. It is wonderful that firms such as Blake Dawson Waldron, a law firm, and individuals like Anne Cregan would give their time pro-bono to assist people like us. The warmth and caring shown by the leader and group members helped me at a difficult time. I would urge any carer to join such a group and urge firms to reach out in this way to assist us any way they can.



*Arahni Sont,
mother of Shai*

Shai is pictured above receiving a Creative Futures 2007 NSW Recognition Award, from Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) and presented by The Hon. Kristina Keneally, MP, Minister for Disability Services. Arahni also received an award.

Respite Camp

We are planning a much-needed respite camp for young people over 16 with mild to moderate disabilities such as Downs Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Cerebral Palsy. The weekend camp will give 30 young people a holiday at the Berry Sport & Recreation Centre, with activities including bush walking, canoeing and whale watching. The camp is a fantastic opportunity for these special young people to have fun in a safe environment. Caring for someone with a disability can be very tiring and demanding, and the weekend respite camp also gives carers and families a much-needed break.

The Carers Network

The Carers Network is an information service to assist carers in the essential and demanding work that they do. We identify and connect people to aged and disability support services. We provide individual support, and through carer groups, link people with other carers who are dealing with the same issues. We can also identify which financial subsidies, make referrals to respite and Home and Community Care services and provide information on program activities in local day centres. Our message to carers is that by looking after yourself, the person you are caring for will also benefit.

Gloria Holland our Carer Support Project Officer (Counselling, Information, Referral and Advocacy) has a focus on locating the 'hidden' carers throughout Eastern Sydney, as well as liaising with councils, allied health and professional services, GPs and Centrelink. She does assessments to ascertain what support services and/or organisations carers can be linked to so that people can meet other carers. Lindy Yoannidis works supporting carers through the Dementia Support Group and Creative Carers Group. This involves organising guest speakers, forums, outings and networks for carers to access the support and information, friendships and contacts that help people in their role as carers. While the focus has been carers of people with Dementia and carers of children with disabilities, recent changes means working more widely to include advocacy, assessment and support to carers in the Eastern suburbs and City of Sydney.

Some current groups that might be of interest include: *Creative Carers* - a support group of parents/carers who have children with special needs; The *Dementia Social Group* meets for lunch and social outings; *Chinese/Cantonese group* for carers of people who are frail aged or have dementia. Holdsworth has information sessions on disability and aged care issues with guest speakers on topics such as Dementia and Carers, The Aged Care Rights Service, Sexuality and Disability. Contact Gloria or Lindy on 9302 3600.

When Harry met Sarah



Some of you will know the Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan movie *When Harry Met Sally*. Here is a true story, *When Harry Met Sarah* set in the Holdsworth Centre!.

Many of you know Harry Fanakis. He is almost part of the furniture at Holdsworth. Having driven for all groups at some stage throughout the past fourteen years, he continues to work as a Team Leader on the Adults Bowling and Gym Groups and on the Teenage Saturday Groups for the Disability Services. Back in 1998 Harry met Sarah, a carer for a client attending the adults cooking programme, (now running as the gym

group). After working together for 18 months, Harry finally gained the courage to invite Sarah out. For those who know Harry. He likes to joke and Sarah thinking this was another one of his jokes, told him she would think about it and let him know within the week. Harry found the next week quite difficult and yes, much to Harry's relief, Sarah did agree to attend the night out.

The next day, they saw a movie and went for ice-cream at Bondi Beach where Harry revealed his true feelings and from that day, they have both been together. They married in June 2002. Some of the adult and teenage clients and their families attended the service and reception with Harry's family traveling from Melbourne. They recently celebrated 5 years of marriage and continue to be very happy and enjoy being part of the Holdsworth Community Centre - the place that brought them together.

A family affair!

Holdsworth playgroup is lucky enough to have maintained the patronage of the Negrine family for three generations. The Negrines are arguably our greatest advocates, as shown by this perspective from June, Laura and Alison.

June Negrine a mother and Mothercraft Nurse, has been coming to our playgroup for twenty-two years. In addition to the many children she has nannied she has had three daughters of her own, all of whom have brought their own children to playgroup. Alison, June's daughter, is also a mother and Mothercraft Nurse and has been attending playgroup for twenty years. Laura, June's granddaughter, is a Nanny, is studying teaching and has been coming to playgroup for two years.

June is a strong believer in the benefits of playgroup for mothers, carers and children. She has found many friends through coming to our playgroup over the years and has enjoyed being able to offer guidance to many new mothers and nannies. *"Playgroup is the most important part of a child's life,"* says June, *"and equally as important is the chance for new mothers to develop a network of support. A mother can come here with her newborn and after six months the baby is recognizing faces and interacting, and in the process the mother has developed friendships of her own."*

Alison values the secure environment of Holdsworth Community Centre, *"It is safe and we love all the outdoor space so the older kids can run around. It has also been great meeting nannies and mothers from different parts of the world who also come here."*

"Children are always ready to go home and have a nice long sleep after coming here" says Laura. *"Whenever I bring someone new to playgroup they are always so surprised by how great it is!"*

Laura says that coming to playgroup also affords the Negrines a chance to spend time together as a family. At Holdsworth Community Centre & Services consider the Negrines to be one of playgroup's greatest assets both for their support and their wealth of information. We look forward to future generations contributing to, and benefiting from, our centre in the years to come!



Aged Care activities

There have been some changes in Aged Care in recent months. The Tuesday bus outing has been revived by a popular demand and has opened our horizons to the greater Sydney Metropolitan area. The *Wednesday Club* is a new group at the Holdsworth Library for people with memory loss which started in early July. Art therapy has been established as part of Wednesday Club and clients seem very happy with the new changes and enjoy the new venue and programs at Holdsworth Library.

Friday Shopping Service has been established instead of the old Tuesday service with great numbers and everyone enjoying new Bondi Junction and Edgecliff service. From now on our *Individual Shopping Service* will be done through Coles Online. This will give us a chance to reach more people that may need shopping and are unable to do it themselves due to medical or physical boundaries. Helen Haag our shopping legend has been more than generous in making sure all our clients are happy with the new changes. And last but not least, we would like to announce that our shopping bus service on Thursdays and Fridays will be managed by our Community Transport team. This should make the process of bookings easier as it will be done by Judy our Receptionist, who can take your shopping booking dates and individual car transport at the same time.

A big thank you all of you who have used our services for your long commitment to Holdsworth, and for your co-operation as we try to make the transition as smoothly as possible.



We have had some enjoyable and well attended activities in July with *Waltz to Vienna* a special excursion for our clients to enjoy the symphony and great melodies of some of the most famous Austrian and German composers of the 18th and 19th century at the beautiful Town Hall which almost felt as grand as Vienna Opera House. Clients enjoyed themselves and had a wonderful time. *Christmas in July* was held at Chapel Hill near the Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens. We had such a huge response, that we needed 2 full buses. Carers were invited as well to join the festivities and we were greeted by a lovely reception and Christmas Decorations, full course Christmas lunch, presents, songs and dancing, and a tour to the Chapel on the Hill.

Community Transport's Club 100 Clients

Holdsworth's Transport Service fully justifies our mission statement by fostering independent life for frail aged Woollahra community residents. Two of our clients passed the magic age of 100 in the last ten months. Another seven clients who are members of Club 95+ are good candidates to join Club 100!

Serving and transporting our Woollahra Community in the 2006/ 2007 financial year Community Transport achieved 7,902 individual trips. Among them are two very special clients who are past the century mark and thus become members of our Club 100.

To live independently in one's own home, go to



your doctor when needed or visit friends, attend performances in the Opera House and be 104 years old, as Miss C is, must seem like science fiction for most people. Miss C, who does not like publicity, is a very bright person with good spirit. For her long life she thanks her doctor and drinking 'ginger ale'. She also regularly visits her friend who lives in nursing home and who is more than 20 years younger.



Our second client N.F. who just turned 100 is a little less independent and uses a wheelchair, but she can get in and out of a car independently. Both of them are very optimistic, have a sense of humour about their age and both thank Community Transport for keeping them on the move and avoiding isolation regardless of their age.

*Top: Miss C. celebrating her 104 birthday with a friend and Community Transport Manager Ian Jankovic and Waireti Amai
Bottom: Joe Baleinagusui and Miss N. on reaching 100.*

New group for children experiencing grief and loss

Are the children in your family affected by some kind of loss? Grief can often go unrecognised, and thus unsupported, contributing to problems that children and families experience. Paradise Kids provides an encouraging environment where children can safely express their thoughts and feelings from the heart, and manage the stress of grief or change. These changes may include death, separation, divorce, illness or any significant loss. We offer a four week Grief and Loss program (September 2007) to children aged 6-11 years with activities that include art therapy, stress reduction, storytelling, group work and movement. Additionally we offer a Boys Program (November 2007) for ages 8-11 years that involves social and communication issues specifically related to Boys. For more information and bookings please contact Tasha Briggs on 0410512620 or tbriggs@paradisekids.org.au or www.paradisekids.org.au This program will run at the Holdsworth Centre on Sundays

Playgroup initiative

The Holdsworth Playgroup is one of the more visible activities at the Centre with lots of parents, carers and children enjoying the networking and the facilities. As part of our commitment to integrated and responsive services we are hoping to expand our Disability Services in a cross program venture with Family Support Services to include children under five with special needs into the playgroup. This will involve a one hour structured activity with a therapist for special needs children (0-5yrs) as part of our existing playgroup and covered by the standard playgroup fee. Our aim is to increase our disability programs for children from 0-5yrs and offer them learning and development opportunities through a structured activity with a therapist. Our aim is to provide access to an environment for inclusion, integration, as well as support and learning opportunities for children with and without a disability as well as for carers and parents.

We would greatly appreciate your feedback on whether this service would be of interest to you and your family. Please pass this information on to anyone that would use this service and do not hesitate to contact Lucian Stoffell (Family Services) or Stefanie Holt (Disability Services) on 9302 3600 should you require more information, want to give your feedback or book your child in.

Holdsworth Community Centre & Services

64 Holdsworth Street
Woollahra NSW 2025

Ph: 02 9302 3600

Fax: 02 9327 5298

www.holdsworth.org.au

If you would like to join the Holdsworth team as a Volunteer please call 9302 3600

